

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal

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LADY LOVELACE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JUDITH WYNNE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER II.

MR. FAIRFAX—or, as he was generally called by his neighbours and friends in the little village of Stanham, "the Squire"—sat comfortably rubbing his knees over his library fire. Although the days were bright and almost summer-like, the evenings were chill and damp, and he liked to hear the crackle and splutter of the logs up his wide chimney.

"And do you mean to tell me, Phil, you have known Edie all these years and not found out she has a will of her own, and a good stout one, too, at times?" he was saying to Phil, who was leaning against the mantelpiece, looking down on him somewhat moodily. This was the first opportunity Phil had had of informing the squire of Edie's resolution to suspend her engagement. All that afternoon Edie had had callers, and Mr. Fairfax had been obliged to put in an appearance in the drawing-room; then dinner had intervened, and Phil was compelled to ask for five minutes in the library before he could get the squire all to himself.

Anthony Fairfax was a fine, well-preserved, old country gentleman, tall, straight, massive in feature and limb. At first sight one would be disposed to credit him with a vast amount of dignity; a tendency to put stringent measures into force on a very slight provocation; a huge sense of self-importance. A second or third glance, however, would dissipate the idea entirely. One would find out that his appearance of self-conscious dignity and importance arose chiefly from the fact of his possessing a loud and somewhat magisterial voice, a good carriage of his head

and shoulders, a slow and stately walk. See a friend touch his hand, watch him listening to some woman's tale of sorrow, and all idea of a pompous, crusty old gentleman would vanish.

Edie knew her father's temperament, his "points" good and bad, just as she knew those of her favourite mare, who, as she used to say, "needed a light but firm hand." On this principle, to all appearance, she managed both father and mare.

Possibly the father knew the daughter as well as the daughter knew him, for he took Phil's confidences very easily, in spite of the disconsolate manner in which they were communicated.

"Give her her head, my boy, for a time—don't thwart her," he said, rubbing his knees once more. "If she has made up her mind to carry out this little whim, depend upon it she'll do it. You ought to have known her well enough by this time to know that. I am only surprised at your expecting me to 'get her to do' this, that, or the other—that's all."

Phil sighed.

"There's one thing I do think you might have done for me, Mr. Fairfax," he said, with something of reproach in his tone, "and that is, have let me hasten on our marriage; you know how hard I begged for it at the beginning of the year."

The squire laughed.

"A most unreasonable thing on your part to expect. Yes, yes, I remember perfectly; I told you then what I tell you now: that she is a great deal too much of a child for me to think of marrying her off for another three or four years to come. Why, she's scarcely out of short frocks and pinafores at the present moment!"

"She's turned eighteen, sir; you'll find lots of fellows think a girl out of short frocks and pinafores at that age."

"Aye, but not the fellows' fathers and mothers, Phil, who have lived a little longer, and know a little more, possibly. No, no; take my advice, let her have her own way in this little freak of hers; you'll come together all right again at the end of the year—take my word for it. And don't be in such a confounded hurry over the marrying part of the business. You young fellows like everything done at express speed—engaged to-day, married to-morrow! The world wasn't made in a day——"

"No; but I think it might very well have been made in three at the farthest," said Edie, opening the door at that moment. "Oh, papa, what can you two people have found to talk about all this long time? I am so sleepy, I have come in to say good-night. You can't possibly have anything else to say to each other."

"No; I suppose there is nothing more to be said," said the squire, looking at Phil with a vague feeling that he himself had said a great deal.

"I suppose there is nothing more to be said," echoed Phil, with a sigh and a vague feeling that he himself had said nothing at all.

"Then I'll say good-night and go," said Edie; "you know I must get all the beauty-sleep I can the next few days, if I don't want to look quite washed out beside my cousin Ellinor." She went up to her father, and gave him one, two, three good earnest kisses. "Now, papa," she said, as she gave him the last, "you are a sensible, middle-aged man, and are supposed to know everything. I do so wish you could give me an idea—the glimmering of an idea—why Ellinor has taken it into her head all of a sudden to come and take up her abode with us?"

"My dear, her mother gave a sufficiency of reason when she wrote. She is obliged to take Juliet—that's her other daughter," he explained, turning to Phil—"to the Riviera to pass the winter, on account of her lungs, so she naturally wishes to leave Ellinor in comfortable quarters till her return."

"But why couldn't Ellinor go with her, or why couldn't she stay with some of her intimate friends in London?"

"Her mother naturally prefers leaving her with relatives."

"But we are such distant relatives. You are her twentieth or thirtieth cousin, and I am fortieth or fiftieth, I suppose," said Edie, following a method of reckoning all

her own. "And to take so much trouble to hunt us up," she added; "it is incomprehensible."

"If," said Phil, "the Winterdownes were at the Castle, it could easily be understood."

Lord Winterdowne was the largest landed proprietor in the neighbourhood, but had not been in residence at the Castle for more than a dozen years.

"How spiteful!" exclaimed Edie, turning sharply upon him. "I did not think men ever said disagreeable things about beautiful young women."

"There are some beautiful young women who never have anything but disagreeable things said about them by men," answered Phil; "the heartless-flirt tribe, I mean."

"Heartless flirts are specially sent into the world by Providence to avenge the wrongs of their sisters who have hearts and get them broken—by the men," retorted Edie.

"Now, Edie—now, Edie," interposed the squire, who had a rooted dread of sparring, even in its mildest form; "what can you, of all people in the world, know about broken hearts, and what can heartless flirts, male or female, have to do with the reason why Ellinor Yorke prefers spending a winter with us instead of with her friends in London?"

"I should say she wanted to shuffle her cards and begin all over again," muttered Phil, a little savagely perhaps—but then he had met Ellinor Yorke in London, and had been thrown occasionally into her society.

Edie turned upon him quickly.

"If that's your opinion of my cousin," she began, "I should advise you not to——" She broke off a little suddenly, adding: "I think I'll say good-night, and go now."

Then, with a little bow to the gentlemen, she left the room.

"I think I'll go too," said Phil; "it's getting late."

The squire rose and went with the young man to the hall-door. It seemed odd to Phil not to see Edie's bright little face peeping behind her father's shoulder. She had stood on the doorstep and watched him away down the avenue—ah! he couldn't say for how many years. Well, he must get used to doing without her in all sorts of ways now, he said to himself with another sigh.

"Pitch-dark, is it?" said the squire, throwing back the door. "Have a man with a lantern to see you through the shrubbery? No! Well, I suppose you

ought to know your way about here by this time. Good-night."

Phil went on his way. The squire stood a moment on the doorstep.

"Phil—Phil, my boy!" he cried after him lustily.

Phil was back in a moment. Perhaps the squire had some good news, some little gleam of hope for him, after all!

"I say, Phil," the old gentleman went on in a somewhat dubious tone, "you won't let this—what shall I call it?—little arrangement between you and Edie stop your coming to the house, will you now?"

"After all these years! Oh no, sir. Trust me, I'll be here morning, noon, and night as usual," answered Phil a little desperately, a little carelessly.

"Yes, yes; night too! You won't let it interfere with our twice-a-week whist-parties, will you? You know if you and your uncle fail us, we come to a dead-lock at once. We shall have the parson wanting to bring his wife in again, as he did when you were away in London. Now, don't mistake me. Mrs. Rumsey is an excellent woman, estimable everywhere and in every way except at a whist-table, with thirteen cards in her hand! Why, she absolutely leads through her partner's queen, and up to her adversary's ace, and lost me the rub the other day with six trumps in her hand!"

Phil smiled a melancholy smile in the darkness.

"I won't fail you at whist, sir," he said, and then he went on his way once more.

The squire watched his lonely figure disappear in the gloom of the avenue.

"I almost wish," he said to himself as he went back into the house, "that Ellinor Yorke were not coming just yet."

He, too, had met Ellinor Yorke in London, but she had evidently left on his mind a different impression to that produced on Phil Wickham's.

CHAPTER III.

EDIE had not left off saying "Why of all places in the world Ellinor Yorke should choose to come here for the winter!" when Ellinor Yorke herself, in fur travelling-dress, followed by a stack of luggage, drove up to the door.

The squire himself drove her from the station. Edie took her up to her room, and sent for some hot tea for her. Then, about five or ten minutes after, the little maiden confronted her father in the library, and apostrophised him vehemently:

"Papa, if you had only told me what she was like! How—how—beautiful—and—and impertinent, and—and—altogether horrible and intolerable, and—and——" she began.

"My dear!" interrupted the squire mildly.

"Well, she is that—all that—and a great deal more. Why didn't you tell me what she was like? She should never, never, never have come into the house!"

"My dear!"

"Papa, I mean it. Ladies always have to invite ladies, and I would never have invited her. Why did you not tell me what she was like? is what I am asking you."

The squire's eyes began to twinkle.

"Edie is afraid of her Phil falling captive. Perhaps Ellinor's coming may do good, after all, and throw the young people into each other's arms again," he thought to himself. What he said was:

"My dear Edie, I told you she was a very beautiful young woman. She promised to be so ten years ago. Don't you remember—when I took you up to London to see her mother."

"Ten years ago! What could I know of beauty, or anything else, ten years ago! But it isn't her beauty I'm finding fault with—I could put up with that—it's herself: her voice, her manner, her smile, her—her everything!"

"I found her very agreeable and entertaining as we drove along from the station!"

"Oh, no doubt. She is one of those who must be agreeable and entertaining to men. With women she is odious! odious! odious!"

"Why, child, you are boiling over! You can't have been more than five minutes with her at the outside. Now, Edie, let me give you a word of advice."

But Edie did not wait for the word of advice; she went on, speaking more and more rapidly.

"Five minutes, papa, is ample time to form an opinion of anybody or anything under the sun. In five minutes a person can say, 'Yes,' 'No,' 'Indeed,' and can look—oh, all sorts of things. In five minutes I can always find out exactly what everybody is like. Now I'll tell you precisely what happened in Ellinor's room from beginning to end. You know I went upstairs with her to show her her bedroom and dressing-room. Well,

I naturally offered to help her off with her heavy seal cloak. 'Thanks no, little Edie,' she said with an impertinent, supercilious smile. 'Will you ring for my maids?' Maids, papa! Of course I rang the bell, and in there walked two—two creatures in bibs and frills. She did not even ask permission to bring one; but let that pass. One of them was French, one German. She speaks first to one, then to the other, in her own language; ignores me entirely. I remind her of my presence by saying, now that she has all she wants, I'll leave her. She gives the same sweet, intolerable smile again, turns to her maids, and begins once more in French and German to tell them about unpacking her trunks and what dress she will wear to-night. Of course I leave the room. There, papa, that's exactly what happened from beginning to end. What do you think of such treatment?"

"My dear Edie, as I've often told you, you are much too hasty in your judgments. I have listened to you patiently; now you must listen to me. Try and see the whole matter in another light, with another pair of eyes—that is, with mine. To begin with, the first offence for which you indict your cousin, seemingly, is her smile. Seen with your eyes, it is supercilious, it is impertinent, it is—it is—— Ah, pardon me, Edie; I have forgotten the other adjective you made use of."

"Oh, it was hateful, odious, patronising, irritating, intolerable!"

"That will do, my dear, thank you. I will select from that list. Suppose I take the last adjective you mentioned—'intolerable.' Well, you say her smile, to your eyes, is supercilious, impertinent, intolerable. Now, Edie, to my old eyes, perhaps every whit as critical as your young ones, it seemed a winning smile, a beautiful smile (for it parted a very pretty pair of lips, and showed a very pretty row of small teeth), and, above all, a well-bred smile, if I may use the term. Now, there are smiles and smiles. Ellinor's smile is essentially the smile of a lady."

"Papa, in another minute I shall begin to think you have fallen in love with her."

The squire's eyes twinkled more and more. Next to his bi-weekly whist, he enjoyed teasing his quick-tempered little daughter.

"Now we'll take the next indictment in its order," he went on, almost unconsciously falling into his loud, magisterial tone. "So far as I can see, Edie, your cousin's next

offence was presuming to address you as 'little.' 'Little Edie' were the words she used—an expression that is on my own lips at least once in every hour of the day; yet it never enters into your mind to fly into a passion over it, and get red to the very roots of your hair."

"Now, papa, I can't stand this. You are speaking in this way on purpose to aggravate me. You know I hate to be reasoned with. I won't be reasoned with!" And here Edie stamped her small foot on the ground, to show how very much in earnest she was.

"But you are little, my dear; nothing will ever make you anything else. The process of dismantling a young lady five-feet-ten in height would necessitate a great effort on your part. I don't like to say you'd have to tiptoe, Edie. Naturally, Ellinor saw this, and, out of pure kindness of heart——"

"Now, papa, I won't hear another word—no, not one half-syllable. Nothing you can say will make Ellinor Yorke anything but an excessively——"

"Beautiful," interposed the squire.

"Disagreeable young woman. And more than that, nothing you can say will ever make me like her the least bit in the world. Fancy going about paying visits with two maids! I wonder if it's a family allowance, and her mother and sister are travelling about in Italy with four in attendance? Why, if I had two maids, I shouldn't know what to do with them; I should set one to wait upon the other while I dressed myself."

"Ah, but see what scope they have for their skill with Miss Ellinor! what a glorious head of hair to spend their genius upon!" said the squire slyly.

"Now, papa, you did not even see it," answered Edie with decision; "it was all done up tightly under her hat, and she did not once take that off. Perhaps," she added a little maliciously, "it was all in crimping-pins, and she'll let it down in a shower to her feet this evening, to make an impression on the first day of arrival. I wonder if she will come down in court plumes and train to dinner? Those two maids between them ought to achieve something altogether wonderful and remarkable in the way of attire."

And something "altogether wonderful and remarkable" those two maids between them did achieve, if to drape a beautiful figure so as to enhance its every charm, and to arrange a mass of dull, deep auburn

hair in heavy coils round a shapely head without hiding its shapeliness, be a wonderful and remarkable achievement. Edie herself was driven to admit it, when, at nine o'clock precisely, Ellinor made her entrance into the drawing-room.

She did not sit down to the seven o'clock family dinner. A series of messages informed Edie of her cousin's movements.

Gretchen, the German maid, who spoke good English, came down asking to know the dinner-hour.

"Seven o'clock," answered Edie; "half an hour earlier than usual, because it is a whist-night."

In ten minutes another message was brought to Edie.

"Miss Yorke was tired from her long journey, and was lying down. Could she have something to eat in her own room at eight o'clock? She would descend to the drawing-room at nine."

At nine o'clock she did descend. The squire always ate his dinner in a hurry on whist-nights, and was possibly not a little relieved that the newly-arrived guest did not make her appearance at the dinner-table, thereby saving him the expenditure of any extra amount of time and ceremony. He was well into his third game when the clock struck nine, and was so intent on the disposal of his trumps, that he did not so much as look up when Ellinor entered the room.

The library, where whist was invariably played, opened off the drawing-room, from which it was separated by two pairs of heavy curtains. Between these two pairs of curtains was a recess capable of holding a sofa, a small chair, and table. Here in this little nook, commanding a view of both rooms, Edie and Mrs. Rumsey—the vicar's wife—invariably sat on whist-nights, each with some mimicry of work in her hand—one, at any rate, of the two, intent on watching the faces of the card-players, and garnering a whole harvest of fun from their chance words and changes of features.

To the right of the squire, and his most dangerous adversary, sat Phil Wickham, looking occasionally a little bored, but his frank, handsome face never so much as clouded by frown or ill-temper, let the cards go against him as they might.

Opposite Phil sat the parson, the Rev. Charles Rumsey, who had been now close upon twenty years vicar of the church of St. Dunstan's-under-the-Hill. It was one of the most ancient churches in the county

of Berkshire, and, as he delighted to tell every new comer he could get to listen to him, had stood there ages before the present village had been called into existence. "For you must know," he would say, "that Stan Ham is literally a corruption, or rather contraction, of St. Dunstan's hamlet, which, little by little, crept up around the old church."

A cheery old man was this vicar, with a kindly word ready for every person, great or small, in the parish, and a hand ever ready to find its way to his pocket, should help of a more substantial kind seem needed. He had a somewhat portly person, with a ruddy face, a keen eye, and a broad forehead, from which the white hair was brushed back but sparsely. His one weak point was the love of a joke. Joke he must, even should the laugh go against himself, or only a serious moment offer occasion for it.

Opposite to the squire, and his invariable partner, sat Colonel Wickham, Phil's uncle, tall, thin, erect, every inch a soldier, every inch a gentleman. Not a vestige of a likeness existed between him and the fair, frank, blue-eyed Phil. His hair must have been black as night in his youth, for a raven-touche showed even now here and there amid the grey, and his eyebrows were jet-black. His features were of a distinctly high-bred type, his hands long, white, and shapely. His eyes were remarkable; dark, full, expressive, questioning eyes, of the sort one might expect to find set in the head of a poet, an artist, a dreamer; and lo! Colonel Wickham was as far removed from any of these as it is possible for a man to be. Colonel Wickham's one aim, object, and pursuit in life was—figures. He was a fair specimen of an English country-gentleman, an excellent rider, a first-rate whist-player, but over and above all this, or rather in front and before all this, he was a statistician; he had, in truth, become fairly eminent as such, and professional men even were at times glad of his aid in checking and equalising sundry returns and estimates which passed through their hands. The Colonel never gave his help grudgingly. He delighted in nothing more than some puzzle in numbers or returns which refused to adjust itself.

"If I happen to die before my uncle," Phil had been heard to say, "when he comes to take a last look at me, instead of saying, 'Poor Phil, what a handsome fellow he was!' or, 'What an untimely ending to a promising young life!' he'll

set to work counting the nails in the coffin-lid. Then he'll make a calculation out of it: 'If a young man, five feet eleven and three-quarters, requires so many nails in his coffin-lid, how many must be required daily throughout the country? N.B.—Returns must be checked by average death-rate in each county. Also a liberal allowance must be made for Chinamen, who bring their coffins over with them, and die of pleurisy when they arrive.' Yes, certainly my death would suggest to him, before anything else, coffin-nails as a grand item at present unstatistified."

Eddie had scolded Phil tremendously for this little speech of his. To say truth, Colonel Wickham had been from her very baby-days a great favourite with her—seemed, in fact, almost as near and dear to her as her own father. To other people those large, expressive eyes of his might seem to be always appraising, cataloguing, enumerating; to her they seemed to tell another tale—a tale of weariness, of world-sickness, which, put into so many words, would have run somewhat as follows:

"I set my brains to work in order to keep my heart quiet. I garner dry sticks because the grapes and wine of life are denied me."

When, where, and how this notion crept into her head she would have found it hard to say. It might have been years ago, when, as a small child, having given the slip to nurse and governess, she had contrived to find her way to Wickham Place, intending to make the Colonel play at draughts with her—a game in which she specially delighted, and which Colonel Wickham played upon a method of calculation entirely his own. She had crept up into his study, expecting to find him surrounded, as usual, with charts, indices, tables, and, lo! there was he, seated beside his fire, staring into the live coals with folded hands and a tear upon either cheek. Or it might have been later on in life, when he had been called upon to give his consent to her engagement with Phil, and he had taken her in his arms, laid his hand upon her head, looked down into her eyes, and bidden "Heaven bless her!" Anyhow, the notion was there, firmly fixed in her brain, and it would have taken a strong hand to uproot it.

This was the group of four upon which Ellinor Yorke's eyes rested as she paused for a moment at the drawing-room door, doubtful in which chair or sofa to ensconce herself.

Eddie advanced to meet her.

"Mrs. Rumsey and I generally sit between the curtains on whist-nights. We like to watch the game. Will you take this chair? May I introduce you to Mrs. Rumsey?" she said, trying hard to be gracious.

Mrs. Rumsey bowed a little stiffly; then held out her hand.

Eddie's cousin! Yes, it must be the right thing to do.

Eddie's cousin, however, took no notice of the outstretched hand, bowed slightly (not stiffly), smiled condescendingly, sank gracefully into the low chair which Eddie had placed for her, turning her head away from the ladies towards the card-table.

Eddie, looking from Mrs. Rumsey to Ellinor, wondered at the contrast between the two women. Mrs. Rumsey was emphatically a type of the conventional, orthodox, provincial clergyman's wife, now so rapidly becoming a thing of the past. She had on the inevitable black silk dress, plain linen cuffs and collar, neat cap, with a tight wisp of hair showing beneath. She had the prosy, placid, somewhat plump face one is apt to associate with the said cap and cuffs, and she had in her hand the inevitable knitting one is apt to expect as a corollary to the other inevitable attributes.

And opposite to her, scarcely so much as conscious of her existence, sat one of the most beautiful young women that England, in this generation, has produced.

"What is it—what is it?" Eddie asked herself, giving absent answers to Mrs. Rumsey's platitudes, and darting swift, sudden glances at her cousin, while she stitched vigorously at her white lilies on her Roman satin sheeting. "What is it makes her look something between an empress and an angel, for she is no nearer one or the other than I am?"

Then she began to take stock of Ellinor's hair, her features, her complexion, and catalogued them somewhat in this fashion:

"Hair just the colour of autumn leaves, when they are going from red to brown—and such a lot of it!—eyes, same colour, only one shade darker; eyebrows narrow, arched, jet-black—oh, she must use a pencil to them!—long, dark lashes—I can't see whether they curl at the ends. I think they do—yes, they do. Nose straight, very, very straight, a little long, but beautiful nostrils; upper lip a little, little too long; lips very red—oh, she must touch them, I am sure, with *crème vermeille*—chin a little prominent; beautiful small teeth, and

oh, what a tiny, tiny ear, and how perfect in its outline! And her complexion is perfect, too; dead, creamy white, with a delicate tinge of colour, just where it ought to be—I don't think, I am not quite sure whether that is quite natural; her maids, too, ought to have something to do to keep them out of mischief—a long, slender pillar of a throat, falling shoulders, a not too slight figure, and—oh, what has she on? What can it be—silk, stuff, cashmere? And what colour can it be? Nothing, I think, that I have ever seen before."

It took Edie at least five minutes, and three times as many swift, sideway glances to decide these two last important questions.

"It's Rouen-blue," she said to herself at length; "and here it looks quite black, and there it shows a fleck or two of pale blue. It's a wonderful colour; I've only seen it once before in my life, and that was on a ceiling in a cathedral. Why, she must have had the stuff manufactured for her, and it is nearly all soft silk, with wool here and there to give depth to the colour. And how is the dress made? How does she get that long line of drapery, and yet have a waist. What lace, too! It must be worth as much as all my jewellery put together. And a set of black pearls!"

But at this moment the squire awakened to the fact that his cousin had entered the room, and sat surveying the card-party.

"Ah, Ellinor, my dear, you there!" he said, half turning his head; "I hope you are feeling more rested. Now pray don't disturb yourselves, gentlemen; I'll introduce you all when we've finished the rub. Trump to your ace, Master Phil. Another time don't look so cocksure when you are playing your ace second hand."

Ellinor, continuing her calm survey of the four gentlemen, said to herself with an easy smile—a brain smile, if the expression be allowed, for the heart had nothing to do with it:

"Four men seated within half-a-dozen yards of me to ignore my presence for possibly half an hour! We shall see."

SOME LONDON CLEARINGS.

EASTCHEAP.

To take a ticket for Eastcheap by underground railway, is just at this moment a new and startling experience. The thing will be common and trite enough by-and-by, but in the first blush of novelty it suggests an invasion of the City, such as has

scarcely a parallel since Boadicea came down with the Iceni and turned the place inside out like a glove. And for those of us even who know the City pretty well, experience has generally stopped short at Eastcheap, except, perhaps, when, bent on some seafaring expedition, a venture has been made into the labyrinth of narrow streets which surrounded Custom House and docks, and cut them off from the rest of the habitable world. And then Eastcheap was the neck of a narrow gorge, a confused scene of lorries, drays, waggons, and heavy-wheeled vehicles generally; where carmen shouted, and heavy horses struck fire from the granite pavement. On either hand narrow lanes shared in the general block, and added their share of traffic to the confusion; a solid, substantial confusion, altogether different from the whirl and press of the other Cheap to the westward.

And now everything is changed. For if you will trust yourself implicitly to some friendly guide without enquiring as to your destination; blindfolding is needless, for you will learn nothing from the newly-pointed tunnels of white brick, and the great walls of cement; but only come along without asking questions, follow the familiar procession of passengers, give up your ticket at the familiar barrier to the collector in the accustomed uniform and cap; and when you come out into the open air, even dispensing with the three twirls round appropriate to the circumstances; even then, with the traditional three guesses, it is quite probable that you will fail to guess rightly where you are. For apart from the novelty of thus coming up to daylight in the very inner recesses of the City, there is a certain strangeness and unfamiliarity about the scene. Here is the meeting-place of great thoroughfares, with a whirl of traffic from the various converging streams; but there is a feeling of space and roominess which is quite a new sensation in this part of the City. Only the statue right in front seems perfectly familiar, and the inscription upon the base of the statue, "William the Fourth," at once puts an end to uncertainty. Here we are in the very throat of London Bridge, Cannon Street opens out its vista of warehouses and offices, King William Street its thronging omnibuses and pedestrians, while Gracechurch Street suggests in its more varied outline the greater antiquity of its pretensions as a City thoroughfare. But the new feature in the scene is the great

thoroughfare of Eastcheap, which is happily allowed to retain its old historic name; a fine, broad, open way bordered by hoardings and demolished houses, which now leads as a grand central avenue to the Tower.

It is difficult to realise that here is the old Eastcheap—the market-place of the eastern side of the City—of the old walled City, which was divided pretty equally by the Wall Brook, a stream that flowed beneath the Roman wall near Moorgate, and joined the Thames at Dowgate, a stream now buried fathoms deep, and only kept in memory by the street and the ward that bear its name. And we are not much less bewildered in trying to recall the Eastcheap of Shakespeare's times, with its Old Boar's Head, where Dame Quickly was hostess, and which was frequented by Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol, as well as by wild Prince Hal, and the inimitable Sir John Falstaff. Indeed, we are here in presence of a clearing upon a clearing, for part of Eastcheap was levelled to make the approaches for the new London Bridge, and that very statue of King William stands, it is said, upon the site of the famous Boar's Head. The tavern, described by Shakespeare, indeed perished in the Great Fire, but a new one rose upon its ashes, with a finely-carved sign of old oak, which is still to be seen in the Guildhall Museum; and this tavern was a noted one, and still well frequented down to the end of the eighteenth century. We may suppose the tavern to have been well known to the town, and an accustomed haunt of players as well as of men of fashion, and we have a record of a performance given there in 1602 by the servants of the Earl of Oxford and the Earl of Worcester, when it was thought an appanage of high nobility to keep a company of players as well as a number of chaplains.

But to account for this utter disappearance of the part of Eastcheap which contained the Boar's Head, we must remember the changes that time has brought about in the ground-plan of the City since Shakespeare's days. The Great Fire, indeed, made a marvellously small alteration in the general plan. Streets and courts, alleys and lanes, rose again from their ruins in their entirety, and the magnificent plan of Wren, which would have given us a City, grand, indeed, but entirely without local history, was never even attempted. But old London Bridge, which many yet living may remember, stood a little to the east-

ward of the present structure, and the approach to it was by New Fish Street, running in a direct line with Gracechurch Street. Eastcheap formed a cross road which ran into Canning Street, which bearing northwards, the route was continued through Budge Row and Watling Street to St. Paul's Churchyard. An alternative route into the City from the west was then, as now, by Holborn, crossing the bridge over the Fleet, then an open stream, with boats and barges moored to the bank. And this was Sir John Falstaff's usual route—and so probably Shakespeare's—into the City, and to his favourite haunt at the Boar's Head. For the hostess, who knew his habits well, lying in wait with Fang and Snare, the sheriff's officers, to arrest him, leads the officers that way, saying: "He comes continually to Pye Corner (saving your manhood) to buy a saddle," and Pye Corner is otherwise known as Giltspur Street, close by Newgate Prison. And so passing under the gloomy archway and prison-house, where the poor debtors, no doubt, were clamouring for charity behind the iron grating, the worthy knight, all unconscious of how great a risk he ran of joining their company, would press through the busy, unsavoury market, with faithful Bardolph at his heels, and stroll down Cheapside, far more open then than now; past the handsome conduit and the church of St. Mary-le-Bow, so-called because built on arches over the street, and past Goldsmith's Row, with a sly glance at the pretty wives of the fraternity—"The most beautiful frame of fair houses and shops that be within the walls of London, or elsewhere in England." Then he passes by the Poultry into the Stock's market, where the Mansion House is now, for "he's indited to dinner to The Lubbar's Head, in Lumbart Street, to Master Smooth's, the silkman," and just there, with dinner in immediate prospect, and his appetite sharpened by the walk, he is waylaid by Fang and Snare, close by the spot where centuries later, an equally celebrated arrest will be made, and also at the suit of a widow—of Samuel Pickwick, that is, at the suit of Mrs. Bardell.

But to return to Eastcheap—when turning towards the Tower and the great clearance made in that direction, it is rather surprising to see the Monument brought out to the full light of day. The Monument, no longer lost among dingy courts and lanes, but looking as if it

meant to take its share of what is going on in the world, after its long retirement—a retirement that dates from the year 1831, when new London Bridge was opened for public traffic, and the tide of traffic, which had long passed up and down Fish Street Hill, was turned another way. Still, our country cousins have always been faithful to the Monument, and now there is a little knot of people looking up at it, half inclined to immure themselves within the tall column, and half doubtful of the venture. The basso rilievo at the base attracts some attention, and excites a little bewilderment. The figures sitting on a cloud are clearly allegorical; but there is a realistic element in burning houses and falling beams, and citizens holding up their hands in horror at the devastation. But the disconsolate figure of a woman might be somebody who has escaped from the fire with very few clothes on; as it happens, it typifies London in her distress, to whom a figure in Roman habit holds out a helping hand—a small boy suggests he is giving her a halfpenny—from some steps opposite. This last is Charles the Second, no doubt, and the Duke of York, afterwards James the Second, stands behind holding a garland, which, perhaps, he has won in sea-fights with the Dutch; and about these is a knot of figures who represent, no doubt, the virtues and graces which are in the habit of adorning both courts and cities.

If we do not go up the Monument now we never shall. It is an enterprise that, if missed in youth, is rarely undertaken in more mature years. And we are here with something of the flavour of novelty upon the scene, and there is a kind of enthusiasm of enterprise in the air. We can see people walking about in the cage on the top, and the sight invites us to join them—just as mice are said to be excited at the sight of other mice looking through the wires of a trap. Even in the business-like neighbourhood of Monument Yard, there is a feeling that the Monument is looking up in popular estimation; were the column in the hands of a company, we should rush to buy Monument shares. Although it is mid-day, waggons and carts are still waiting for their loads from Billingsgate, and a couple of fish-porters, who have just finished their job, doffing the sackcloth that has hitherto draped their shoulders, look doubtfully towards the familiar column. Cries one: "Toss ye who pays for both up the Monymment." But the other is of the old school, and mutters something to the

effect that a drop of beer would do them more good, and the opportunity is lost for these fish-porters of improving their minds by an extensive survey of the world around.

There is a certain feeling of incongruity in walking into the interior of a classic pillar by an ordinary swing door, and then corkscrewing up the inside of it; but your respect for the Monument grows with each successive twist of the corkscrew; there seems no end to the steps which circle above and below. Every now and then there is a dull, sullen roar through the chimney-like cylinder, from the opening and shutting of the swing door at foot, as some victim enters or escapes. When you are nearly at the top, as you think, and meet some party of laughing young girls who have counted the steps from the top, and have already got to over a hundred, your heart sinks, and you wish you had not come. You may have heard people who have undergone hard labour describe the agonising effects of the treadmill upon the back sinews of the legs—well, you can feel for them now—for the rogues and vagabonds, that is, and do not wonder that they take things easy when they come out into the world again. But presently the twilight that filters in through the narrow slits here and there is succeeded by the dawning light of day; the noise of echoing footsteps, and of the opening and shutting door, is drowned in the full roar of London, and you come thankfully out on the capital of the column, and into the little circular cage, above which flares the gilded tongue of flame.

The City is below us, with its streets marked out with lines of housetops, and the white towers and spires of churches, while just below crowd long lines of vehicles, and people swarm like ants, running to and fro with as much apparent aim or purpose. All round, a misty, smoky veil bounds the horizon, but the City itself is perfectly clear and free from smoke. From all the myriad chimneys there is hardly a single curl of smoke—no household fires burn among this wilderness of roofs; and over the clearly-defined mass of houses St. Paul's rises majestically with its gilded ball and cross that glitter in the sunshine. But the river looks dark and lowering, with the towers of Westminster rising out of the gloom from which it issues, and then, with its bridges showing bright against its tawny waters, it loses itself among masts and sails in dark, impenetrable distance. As to what lies beyond

the river, it is all concealed in a dense cloud of mist and smoke, but close at hand the Tower shows with the distinctness of a model, its fosse, its walls and bastions, and stern donjon keep; and you can see where new towers are rising in their smooth white stonework, which are to complete its attractions as an ancient show-place. Rising almost against us, with its foundation in the deep valley of Thames Street, where carmen and porters are bustling and pushing, is the handsome tower of St. Magnus, one of Wren's most successful works, but all enveloped in scaffolding—let us hope for repairs, and not for destruction. Everywhere over the housetops is spread a network of wires, and yet hardly noticeable except on close inspection, while the supporting posts on every roof seem to be hung with strings of onions. Here and there, and often where the houses are thickest, shows a patch of green from some churchyard or old-fashioned court, but the general hue is a neutral, dusky tint, cold and subdued, but not uncheerful, with dusky patches at places, where old London, with its dull red-brick and red chimney-pots, keeps a corner above ground.

It is strange to reflect that almost all that we now see, was after the Great Fire a ruin and a wilderness; that people made their way across, with fear and trembling, a desert haunted by thieves and desperadoes who might lurk among the ruins of St. Paul's, or spring out upon the rash traveller from among the broken columns of the Exchange. And here the fire began, just below, as everybody knows, in a baker's shop—the king's baker, if you please, by name Faryner, a name that one suspects must have been connected with his office, as if Farinier or flourman, hereditary bakers, perhaps, whose ancestors had helped in that famous baking that is limned forth in the Bayeux Tapestry. But anyhow, there the fire began late on a Saturday night, or perhaps early on Sunday morning. And with a roaring easterly wind the fire spread and spread till all about Thames Street was a glowing mass of flame, that was fed by the great store of combustible matters thereabouts, pitch and tar, "and warehouses of oyles, and wines, and brandy, and other things," as Mr. Pepys records. Then, by church-time, when the citizens should have been quietly on their way to church, in their best doublets, with wives and children by their sides, everybody was rushing about with

furniture and valuables, piling them for safety in the churches, that were themselves destined soon to succumb to the devouring flames, the very steeples and towers of stone crackling up and burning like so much tallow. More fortunate and far-seeing were those who managed to secure a lighter or a barge, while some recklessly flung their belongings into the river, on which furniture and rich goods floated up and down with the tide, all abandoned and derelict. And so the fire went on burning till Friday, "all up the hill of the City in a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame." And by that time the old City within the walls was practically destroyed. A little patch was left between the Tower and Bishopsgate, including Aldgate, where still bits of old, or at least mediæval, London are to be found; but on the other hand, the fire overleapt the wall by Ludgate and Newgate, and carried all before it as far as Fetter Lane and the Temple, where all, as far as the eye could reach, was a waste of smoking ruins. "A sad sight to see," writes Pepys, "how the river looked, no houses nor church near it, to the Temple."

Once more on terra-firma, and through the swing-door into the street, we are among a nest of taverns and refreshment-houses, which assert themselves mostly as in the way of fish ordinaries and dinners, with facilities in the frying and broiling line for those who only want a snack; and then, as we cross Monument Yard, fruit becomes curiously blended with fish, and a mingled odour of oysters and oranges pervades the air. Here are large rooms, the doors thrown wide-open, and bills posted up announcing public sales, while spread out to view are great boxes of oranges, and lemons, and grapes, and all kinds of fruit from the Mediterranean, while another sale-room is devoted to dried fruits of sorts such as will presently furnish forth the Christmas dessert of paterfamilias. And so, wandering into Eastcheap again, we come upon a corner where demolition and rebuilding are going on, and read upon an ancient label, "Weigh-House Yard." The yard is now knocked into Eastcheap, and only this little corner remains to recall its former existence, of which Strype, in his edition of Stow's Survey, records, "In Love Lane"—and Love Lane is still in existence, only shortened—"on the north-west corner entering into Little Eastcheap"—Little and bigger Eastcheap are all as one by now—"is the weigh-house, built on the ground

where the church of St. Andrew Hubbard stood before the Fire of London. Which said weigh-house was before in Cornhill. Where are weighed merchandizes from beyond the seas by the King's Beam. Over this office, or weigh-house, is a large room, now made use of for a Presbyterian meeting-house." And this was the beginning of the King's Weigh-house Chapel, which has now found other quarters.

And then, on the other side of the great new thoroughfare, which it is to be hoped will be called Eastcheap right through, but on the other side of the Cheap, are those famous lanes, Mincing and Mark Lanes, which are the great commercial centres of the corn-dealers and the produce-brokers. It is pleasant here to plunge into some narrow court, and, trusting to be guided by the stream of passengers, to be carried here and there, along corridors lined with offices, where here and there an open door reveals quite an Arabian Nights' collection of objects—strange gums, and spices, and balsams, all neatly arranged as if in a museum, with a strange, subdued scent, as from Araby the blest; while the names on the whitened glass panels are of all kinds of queer, cabalistic, and crack-jaw character. Sindbad himself, perhaps—who is a merchant, by the way, and not a sailor—is driving up to the distant entrance in a cab, loaded with strange packages; the dark, yellow-eyed man in a fez, with a cheroot always between his lips, who scents the neighbourhood with tobacco and sandal-wood.

But strange it is to find that you may walk miles, as it seems, through corridors and avenues, where people file through in interminable procession, without ever coming under the open sky, except, perhaps, for a moment in some quaint, three-cornered court, where you have a choice of as many of these busily-thronged passages; and so you may go twirling about from one to the other till you lose all notion of orientation, and may come out eventually in Gracechurch Street, or Fenchurch Street, or more likely in Mark Lane.

For it is to and from Mark Lane that the run is most incessant just now, though these cunningly-pierced burrows, and the great corn-market, with its acres of glass roofs, is sufficient evidence of our whereabouts, while the pale, sallow dealers in drugs and gums are replaced by a more stout and ruddy physique, as the country dealers come thronging in from their distant homes. A savour, too, of roast

meats and grills replaces the musky perfumes of gums and drugs. For the nibbling of samples and the weighing of prices contribute to hunger and thirst, and there is a kind of market-dinner feeling manifested about the taverns of Mark Lane which makes the passer-by, for the moment, fancy himself gifted with a country appetite.

Time out of mind, no doubt there has been a corn-market at Mark Lane, which seems to derive its name from the mart, or market, while Mincing Lane, close by, is said to be called after the dainty nuns of St. Helen's, who, picking their way delicately among the miry ways of the City, got the nickname of Minchons, and so passed it on to this lane, which belonged to them, and led up to their convent walls; and Stow records how "in this lane, of old time, dwelled divers strangers, born of Genoa and those parts; these were commonly called galley-men, and brought up wines and other merchandise, which they landed in Thames Street." Now, this old time was, probably, when the Genoese had the trade of the East in their hands, so that the odour of spices and drugs has probably hung about these parts ever since.

Coming into Eastcheap again—or perhaps it is Great Tower Street now—with a fine view of the old keep rising over hoardings and demolished buildings, we are in full sight of the new railway-station, with its neat white brickwork, and the inscription, in the now familiar blue-white glazed letters, "Mark Lane Station." In strict topographical fact, the station is at the bottom of Seething Lane. And there is something strangely familiar in this Seething Lane, for you may remember that hereabouts was the old Navy Office and the abode of Samuel Pepys.

There is nothing very much to remind us of the days of Pepys at this end of the lane, although he may have seen the building of those comfortable-looking red-brick houses which have just escaped demolition by a hair's-breadth. There is one house, looking forlornly over a heap of bricks and refuse, that especially strikes the fancy—a snug, homely residence, with solid sashes and square windows flush with the brickwork, and on the top floor a ware-house, with a crane at the side; where the old-fashioned merchant, in his full-skirted coat and scratch wig, might sit in his parlour over his wine, and watch the full sacks as they swung upwards to his storehouse.

And what histories there have been in these snug red-brick houses, that are not ancient exactly, but only old-fashioned, but with at least a century and a half of human life about them! Children have racketed about the square, solid rooms; lovers have enjoyed soft twilight hours in the cosy window-seats; family feasts have gone on with song and dance; wedding-feasts and funeral baked meats; and now no more shall domestic fires burn in those snug fireplaces, with the tall carved chimney-pieces, for here is an end of it all in a heap of old bricks and some ragged rafters. Here and there on the hoardings are bills that announce sales of old materials—among them one that seems suggestive: Number Nine, Black Raven Court, and with so much lumber and wainscoting, two carved chimney-pieces in wood, and one in statuary marble inlaid. And, as it happens, we can trace the beginning and the end, for, turning to the Survey, we find: "Black Raven Court, an open place, with good new brick buildings, well inhabited." That would be in the first years of the eighteenth century. But what lies between? What unrecorded histories and unwritten romance?

But here, on the other side of the broad, new highway, stands the old church of All Hallows, Barking. Why Barking, it is difficult to see, as there is no such place about here, till we are reminded that the church once belonged to the nuns of Barking, taking us back, indeed, to the days of Bishop Erkenwald and the Saxon kings. There is nothing outwardly to show for this antiquity but a very plain and ugly brick tower, which harmonises, however, well enough with the huge pile of bonded warehouses that shuts it out from a view of the Tower. If somebody would make a clearance of them, he would deserve well of his country. And cheek by jowl with the brick tower, a warehouse, with cranes and hoists, has made an effort to be even with it, but has only been able to get up two-thirds of the way; and then there are some squat, ugly windows and a doorway which a Gothic purist would call debased. But there is a history about the old brick tower which really dates from before the Great Fire, and from the top of which Master Samuel Pepys watched the progress of the flames. And here is the history as Strype gives it: "This church was much defaced by a lamentable Blow of twenty-seven Barrels of Gunpowder that took fire the 24th day of January, 1649,

in a ship-chandler's house over against the south side of the church." The ship-chandler was very busy in his shop that night, barrelling up of gunpowder—by candle-light, no doubt, with the door of his horn lantern left open to facilitate the operation—when away went gunpowder and ship-chandler, the tower of the church, The Rose Tavern close by, and a parish dinner, parishioners and all, in this one "lamentable Blow." Digging out The Rose Tavern, people found the mistress sitting in her bar, and one of the drawers standing by the bar's side, with a pot in his hand, just as it might have been had the blow happened the day before yesterday.

But, the morning after the Blow, was found upon the upper leads of Barking Church, a young child lying in a cradle as newly laid in bed. It was never known whose child it was, so one of the parish kept it for a memorial, and Master Strype, looking round the neighbourhood in the year of the Great Fire, and taking his glass at a neighbouring tavern with the parish worthies, records that he saw the child, then grown to be a proper maiden. But as to the further history of this proper maiden, history is, unfortunately, silent.

Still, in spite of its history, Barking Church is not in any ways outwardly beautiful, so that it is an agreeable surprise on entering, to see such a fine, solemn interior, with a vestibule the whole width of the church, divided from it by a finely-carved wooden screen—a pleasant kind of portico, with seats and tablets, where a good deal of parish business is going on. This is the part, no doubt, that suffered from the Blow, and was happily restored in the taste of the age, for the interior of the church is composed of three ancient bays, with sturdy round columns of the Norman period, and three more of Perpendicular character at the eastern end—altogether, a place worthy of its history, being a very ancient foundation, which shared in its day many of the memories of the Tower, both as palace and prison. The dust of citizens and of courtiers mingle beneath its pavements. Knights, drapers, merchants of the staple, clerks of the green cloth, servants of the King—here were their graves, and some of their monuments have survived to the present day. A fine altar-tomb on either side of the chancel, with some fragments of brasses, are of high antiquity, and bespeak some tenant of more than ordinary dignity, in his lifetime. Here lies Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey,

beheaded in 1546, and there is a doubtful tradition that the heart of Cœur de Lion was buried in the king's chapel, which once formed part of the structure.

But now it is one o'clock, and by an excellent arrangement, for this is the City dinner hour, it is the hour also for week-day prayers. Perhaps not very many of the busy citizens avail themselves of the opportunity; but one or two are seated here and there, and the curate appears in the reading-desk, and so we depart.

And to view these City churches aright, they should be visited on Sunday, when the City is the quietest, most peaceful place in the world; the streets all swept and clean, but nobody walking on the pavement; no cabs rattling by, no rolling waggons, but all the charm of quiet and seclusion. As we stand at Mark Lane Station we hear somebody talking at the end of Seething Lane. We are a little late, and the bells have ceased to ring, so that the hush and stillness everywhere is like that of a city of the dead. And so our footsteps echo up the lane, which was once called Synedun, but has for centuries been known as Seething. On the right is the opening to a court, beneath a tracery of elaborate ironwork. It is Catherine Court, once haunted by Russian merchants, with houses solid and respectable, now altogether offices, the blinds all down and nobody peeping out from behind them. The court, by the way, does not take its name from the saint of the old hospital, and present docks, beyond the Tower, as you might think, but from the Empress Catherine of Russia, by no means a saintly personage. Thus, at least, says Miss Aldridge, who gives a good description of this neighbourhood in her pleasant romance of the "Tower Gardens."

There, near the top of the lane, where the big blank warehouses now stand, was the old Navy Office, where Samuel Pepys was clerk of the acts. The building had once been the site of the priory of the Crutched, or Crossed Friars, and occupied a considerable portion of the lane, with the offices in the centre of a quadrangle, and the residences of the chief officials round about, with plenty of elbow-room in the way of courts and gardens. Mr. Pepys singing in his garden on summer evenings with the poor wretch his wife, and Mercer, her maid, who was more gifted, will be suggested to those familiar with the Diary, and will give us a measure of the changes that have since taken place. And

yet what a cheerful, merry soul it was—chirruping and singing through all that dismal time—the plague; the fire; the Dutch in the Thames and setting fire to Chatham!

And Mr. Pepys had only to step across the way to reach the gate of St. Olave's churchyard—a handsome but dismal-looking gate, adorned with skulls and emblems of mortality, said to be a memorial of the plague. The gate is now closed, but we can see into the churchyard through its bars, with its tombstones of forty or fifty years ago. But the practicable entrance to the church is round the corner in Hart Street, where we come upon signs of active life. There are retail shops in Hart Street, and people live there, stand at their doors and look out of their windows; and the organ booms out into the street, and a little cluster of belated people are standing, half hesitating, at the church-door.

Within is a charming old church, with dark stone columns and pointed arches, and a choral service going on in a brisk and hearty fashion; the seats well filled, and yet with plenty of room; the little charity-school of the parish sitting behind the choir. Everywhere quaint tablets and memorials, and at the east end of the church a range of monuments, exceedingly good and quaint—a circle of dignified citizens of Elizabeth's days and James's, with their red cloaks, stiff ruffs, and stiffer beards. A later memorial that occupies a whole bay of the church, with a bust above of a pleasant, sympathetic-looking female, incites interest, but is too far off to make out. But just above is the recent memorial to Pepys in alabaster—with a medallion of him in his periwig—and we think of him slumbering in his high pew, or, perhaps, whispering the news with Commissioner Sir William Pen, or exchanging affable greetings with his brethren of the Trinity House—our hymn-books are lent us by that august body, at least they have that inscription upon them; and that, too, seems to form a subtle link between our little day and the misty, indefinite past.

THE WOOING OF SENDAI.

AN OLD JAPANESE LEGEND.

For ever in the pine-clad shore
Of Takasango's Bay
The cold waves dash their crystal heads
In many-tinted spray,
Less cold than she whom Sendai's son
Woo'd for so long and strangely won.

Fairer was she than aught of earth,
 Divine in form and face,
 Each limb and feature charmed the eye
 With more than mortal grace;
 Yet naught of earth could move or thrill
 Her heart, as marble hard and chill.
 Long was the suit that Sendai urged;
 Slow years their courses ran,
 Yet never dared the immortal maid
 Hear love from mortal man.
 Sky born, how could she bend below
 And e'en a prince's worship know?
 And yet she loved him. Day by day,
 Beneath one wind-swept pine,
 She heard him to his samisen*
 Singing her praise divine,
 A woman still though goddess, she
 Drank in his worship eagerly.
 Entranced, enslaved, he saw the light
 Burn in her deep-lashed eyes;
 No longer thwarted, 'neath the pine,
 He clasped his beautiful prize,
 Loud thunder rolled; the gods above,
 Saw that a goddess stooped to love.
 And then, the story says, the gods
 Changed each into a pine;
 And still with sounds of ocean's voice,
 Their love-songs interwine,
 Condemned to sigh and sob in vain,
 In storm and sunshine, wind and rain.

THE CLIMBS OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT.

IN TWO PARTS. PART II.

In a previous article we described the climbs of the most interesting English crag—the Pillar Rock in Ennerdale. In the present paper we deal with ascents in other parts of the English Lake District, and among these the precipices and crags of Scafell are second in interest only to the Pillar Rock itself. To describe with minuteness the many climbs on Scafell is impossible in the space at our disposal; the cragsman could well spend a fortnight in clambering about the mountain, and even then its climbs would not be exhausted. To climbers, Scafell is a more interesting mountain than its companion, Scafell Pikes. On the Upper Eskdale side the latter has indeed some fine precipices and crags, which are almost wholly unexplored; but nowhere does it offer such interesting ascents as those to be found on Scafell immediately around Mickledore. To be filled with the sense of the grandeur of the Scafell crags, it is best to approach them from below—that is, from Wastdale. On rounding the low shoulder of Lingmell above Wastwater, and following the course of the stream on the right hand, the stranger will find himself in a grand mountain cove. On either hand are

Lingmell and the low shoulder of Scafell, while the rugged cliffs of Scafell and the Pikes are in front. Between the two mountains is the strange, square, tooth-like gap called Mickledore, and from it the Scafell cliffs rise in a grand serrated curve, like the back of a scaled monster rearing itself in air. From below Mickledore descends for more than half a mile a long, tapering, grassy mound, locally known as Brown Tongue. The resemblance is complete, and the wild mountain cove in which the tongue reposes may well be likened to the cavernous mouth of a giant. The place is solitary, remote, impressive. It becomes more imposing the nearer the cliffs are approached, and when close under the "battlemented front of Scafell," the wildness of the scene fills the mind. It is wholly grim and stern; no touch of beauty relieves the austerity. Whether sun-smitten in the summer noon, or enwreathed with flying mists, the cliffs of Scafell are always grand. They compose the finest rock scenery in England, and there is nothing grander in Scur-na-Gillian or the Cuchullins.

Mickledore may be reached by scrambling up the steeply sloping "screes" which form its Wastdale slope; but the easier and more romantic approach is by the grassy ledge, which will be seen projecting from the face of the Scafell precipice. This ledge, or shelf, is in but few places less than four feet wide. In places it is composed of shattered heaps of rock, which seem barely to keep their equilibrium; but though there is a precipice of considerable height on the left hand, the passage along the ledge is free from risk, so long as the rock-wall on the right is closely hugged. By one who watched from below the passage along the ledge of some of the early pioneers of Lake climbing, it was christened the "Rake's Progress," and the name appears apt, when it is remembered that the ledge leads from the lower limb of the Lord's Rake to the Mickledore Ridge. Stepping from the Rake's Progress on to Mickledore, the stranger finds himself in what the guide-books call "one of Nature's most savage retreats," and truly the scene is wild enough. The summits of Scafell and Scafell Pikes—the two highest mountains in England—are but one thousand two hundred yards apart in a straight line, but between them is the strange gap called Mickledore. From the summit of Scafell Pikes its rock-strewn sides slope gradually towards Scafell. Presently the slopes steepen on either hand,

* The national musical instrument of Japan, very much resembling our guitar.

leaving a saddle-shaped ravine. The saddle dwindles to a roof-like ridge, which stretches in a gentle curve from mountain to mountain, till it ends abruptly against the wedge-shaped cliffs of Scafell, which rise almost vertically for five hundred feet and more. Though the slopes of the ridge are steep, and the ridge itself is so narrow that it may easily be bestrided, there is no danger whatever in walking along it; yet appalling are the terrors of this gorge as told in the older guide-books. "It may indeed be crossed," says Murray, "but the passage is difficult, and at one point dangerous, and it should be attempted only by experienced cragsmen, or members of the Alpine Club." In another passage the same writer thus speaks of the southern slope from the ridge to the strange solitudes of Upper Eskdale—a slope which is indeed steep, stony, and tedious, but nothing more: "The descent into Eskdale is over terraces of slippery turf, and down slanting sheets of bare rock, which makes the enterprise, even with the assistance of a guide, one of peril. Some have attempted this descent, and turned back in terror at the difficulties before them; but there are places from which a tourist might find it even more difficult to retreat than to advance."

Looking up at the Scafell cliffs from Mickledore, the direct ascent appears impossible, as, in fact, it has hitherto proved. But there is more than one way of successfully turning the flank of these forbidding precipices. The routes by the "Broad Stand" and "Chimney," on the left or Eskdale side of Mickledore, are now tolerably well known to lake-climbers; they are even described with more or less accuracy in guide-books. The Broad Stand is reached by descending close under the cliffs for twenty-one yards till a cleft, eighteen inches wide, is seen between two small upright rocks. Any man of moderate size can worm his way through the cleft, and climb out at the end on to a grassy corner. From this point there is only one practicable way. It lies up walls and slopes of rocks, and "to any ordinary cragsman it presents," said Professor Tyndall, writing in the *Saturday Review* in 1859, "a pleasant bit of mountain practice, and nothing more." The Professor admits, however, that "to persons given to giddiness, or lacking sufficient sureness of foot or strength of grasp," the climb is not recommendable. The danger consists in slipping on any of the slopes or walls, when the climber would go bumping down many feet without any chance of stopping

till, with considerable personal discomfort, he reached the base of the precipice. The entrance to the Scafell Chimney (a gully two feet wide running into and up the face of the cliff) is a few yards lower down than the entrance to the Broad Stand. It is impossible to go straight up the Chimney, as the way is blocked by an overhanging slab, and escape must be effected either by the right-hand wall near the top, where the hand-hold is miserably inadequate, or by the "corner" forty feet up the Chimney. The passage of the corner is a matter of stride and balance, as there is no positive hold for the hands. There is a bad drop into the Chimney behind, and a slip in rounding the corner would end in broken limbs, if not a battered skull. A man essaying the corner must apply himself like a plaister to an unpleasant projecting rock, and then by shifting the weight from one foot to the other (for the legs are stretched widely apart) he can creep round. These climbs in the Chimney are very little known, and none of them should be attempted in wet weather, when the Chimney is indeed a mere spout. Even when the escape is made from the Chimney by the routes named, the remainder of the ascent requires care, as the rocks here are smooth, and they slope steeply towards Eskdale, some at as great an angle as fifty-four degrees. Last August a young and active climber, forgetting for a moment the caution that should always go hand-in-hand with daring, attempted to cross one of these smooth, sloping rocks. He slipped, slid rapidly down for twenty-seven feet, vainly catching at the smooth surface and then bounded through the air in a leap of seventy feet, falling full on his face just at the edge of the dry watercourse below the Chimney. Happily the place on which he fell was loose and not rocky ground; and he escaped with a broken rib and some dangerous face and head wounds. The escape from death was almost miraculous; many men have been killed by falling a quarter of the distance. The adventure may serve to remind other climbers that the Scafell cliffs must be treated with due respect.

There is yet another and a more direct way of climbing the Scafell cliffs from Mickledore, which, for want of a better name, we may christen the "North Climb." This route is known to very few. It was discovered for himself in 1874, by Mr. George Seatree, the author of a pleasantly-written little pamphlet on the Lake District, now,

unfortunately, out of print. When Mr. Seatree ascended, he was with a friend, and the Wastdale people received his story with incredulity, "auld Will Ritson" declaring that "nowt but a fleein' thing could get up theear." Mr. Seatree, however, was preceded in this ascent by Major J. P. Cundill, R.A., who climbed this way both up and down alone as long ago as 1869. For the benefit of climbers we quote here Mr. Seatree's description: "From the ridge we traversed a ledge of grass-covered rock (the Rake's Progress) to the right, until we reached a detached boulder, stepping upon which we were enabled to get hand-hold of a crevice six or seven feet from where we stood. To draw ourselves up so as to get our feet upon this was the difficulty; there is only one small foothold in that distance, and to have slipped here would have precipitated the climber many feet below. Having succeeded in gaining this foothold, we found ourselves in a small rectangular recess, with barely room to turn round. From here it was necessary to draw ourselves carefully over two other ledges into a small rift in the rocks, and then traverse on our hands and knees another narrow ledge of about eight feet to the left, which brought us nearly in a line with Mickledore Ridge. From here all was comparatively smooth sailing." The "detached boulder" may be identified with certainty by noticing that it is embedded in the Rake's Progress close to the top of a funnel-shaped grassy gully, about ten or twelve yards from Mickledore. None but experienced climbers should attempt the "north climb" from Mickledore. It is unpleasant to stick on one of the higher ledges, for from these the climber looks almost vertically down to the valley many feet below. In these circumstances a sudden seizure akin to sea-sickness may assail the cragsman who has not his nerves under thorough control.

All who have been on the top of Scafell, near Mickledore, must have looked down with wonder and admiration into Deep Ghyll, that vast, almost vertical funnel, which descends from the top of the mountain to the Lord's Rake. It can be descended straight down its whole length, though in one place there is a very steep pitch, and some little danger is incurred from falling stones. But the most conspicuous object at the upper part of Deep Ghyll is a pinnacle rock with some slight resemblance, from certain points

of view, to the celebrated Pieter Botte in Mauritius, except that the stone on the top is much smaller than the knob which forms the summit of the Mauritius mountain. The Deep Ghyll pinnacle is perhaps best named the "Scafell Pillar," for on examination it will be found to have several features in common with the Ennerdale Pillar. Both have a Pisgah rock and a Jordan gap, both have a high and low man, and both have a slanting slab in similar positions. So inaccessible does the Scafell Pillar appear, that it is probable no one ever thought of making an attempt upon it till Mr. W. P. Haskett Smith, whose climbs on the Ennerdale Pillar were referred to in a previous article, looking at the Rock with the eye of a genius for climbing, thought he could see a way to the top. He made the attempt alone in September of this year, and successfully reached the top, being the first man to set foot on the summit of this forbidding peak. A week or two later, Mr. Haskett Smith, accompanied by Mr. J. W. Robinson, a local cragsman of much enthusiasm, judgment, and skill, made another attack upon the rock. Starting from a point about sixty yards from the lower end of the Rake's Progress, and climbing upwards, they soon entered a very long, narrow, almost vertical chimney, the ascent of which taxed their strength greatly. Emerging at last, they reached a steep arête, which led direct to the ridge of the Scafell Pillar, and thus to the top, where they left their names in a glass bottle. Now that the way is known, the Deep Ghyll Pillar will doubtless be attempted by other climbers. On the whole Wastdale side of Scafell there is fine climbing, nor are the minor mountains which buttress the great heights by any means deficient in interest.

Of all the natural features of the Wastwater District, Piers Ghyll is perhaps the most noticeable. No one coming over the Sty Head Pass from Borrowdale can fail to see this remarkable fissure which, after making an almost right-angled bend in the low ground at the foot of Lingmell, suddenly narrows, and runs straight into the face of the Lingmell crags. So far as can be ascertained, Piers Ghyll has never been climbed. It is one of the few places which have resisted the assaults of the present generation of climbers. Of course when we speak of climbing Piers Ghyll we do not mean merely penetrating into the fissure till further progress is barred, and then climb-

ing out up one of the sides. The Ghyll cannot properly be said to have been climbed until all the obstacles in the ravine are overcome, and the climber emerges at the top, under Lingmell crags. In all probability this feat will be soon achieved; but so far, notwithstanding the elaborate attempts which have been made with ropes, ice-axes, and steel wedges, everyone has failed. Anyone may scramble a good way along the torrent-bed in Piers Ghyll. Soon the ravine narrows, the stream is pent in narrow bounds, the walls on either hand rise higher and are almost perpendicular. Daylight is obscured, and after heavy rain the noise of the falling water is deafening. The first difficult place is a smooth steep slab of rock on the left hand. This can be passed; but the difficulties begin at the third waterfall, where there is a vast curving rock shelving towards the stream. Much, of course, depends on the state of the stream. Long ago, when Mr. James Payn, then a young man at college, visited the Lake District, it was his ardent delight to roll huge stones down the mountain-side and hark as they thundered into the Pease Ghyll (for so the novelist spells the name). Mr. Payn tells how a shepherd of Wastdale, collecting his sheep on Lingmell in the snow, slipped and fell into Piers Ghyll. His iron heel caught in some crevice and wrenched off the boot-sole, thus breaking the fall, and the man survived his perilous adventure. There is a rumour too that a hardy climber, resolved on conquering the passage of the Ghyll, passed difficulty after difficulty till he reached a spot from which advance and retreat seemed equally impossible. He lost nerve, and dared not make an attempt. There he remained for twenty-four hours, his shouts rendered impotent by the roaring waters. At last, when starvation stared him in the face, he gathered courage, and flung himself from his resting-place into the deep pool formed by one of the falls. The water broke his fall, and he scrambled back a sound man. But his adventure is not forgotten; and the local guides tell you flatly that Piers Ghyll cannot be climbed. So did the Swiss tell Mr. Whymper that the Matterhorn could not be climbed, and that its summit was the haunt of evil spirits. But the Matterhorn succumbed nevertheless, and so, we doubt not, will Piers Ghyll when the right man appears. To climb the whole length of Piers Ghyll, and then scale the Lingmell crags above, and so

reach the summit of the mountain, is pronounced by a competent judge the hardest and finest climb in the English Lake District, and one which would keep the climber as severely on the stretch as any piece of rock-climbing in Switzerland.

The inexhaustible richness of the Wastwater district, from the climber's point of view, tempts us to linger too long in it, to the exclusion of other districts. We will not speak, therefore, of the chimneys in the north side of Great End, of the "Horn," the "Screen," and "Westmoreland's Chimney" on Great Gable, of the Stirrup crags on Yewbarrow, or of the rotten gulleys in the Screees, but will pass to the consideration of climbs in other parts of the district.

Of these, Striding Edge, on Helvellyn, is by far the best known. Scott's grandiose poem and Wordsworth's exquisite verses have given immortality to Striding Edge. Save for the ugly dam which banks up the shore of the Red Tarn for the convenience of the Glenridding lead-mines, which have almost destroyed the beauty of the upper reach of Ullswater, all is now as it was when young Gough—Scott's Pilgrim of Nature—slipped over, and was killed, in the spring of 1805. The setting of the two poems is there, all except the eagle. If you chance to be on Striding Edge on a stormy day, when the mists are boiling up from the coves of Grisedale, you will say it is a place an English Manfred might choose for his soliloquies. But as for danger, there is hardly any. To the cragsman it is a promenade; for ladies, merely a pleasant piece of exertion. If any persons are rendered giddy by the steepness of the slopes, and on the Grisedale side they are certainly steep, they can be perfectly secure by taking the lower path. Not far from the Patterdale end of the ridge is a small iron cross, set up to the memory of one Robert Dixon, who was killed on Striding Edge while following the Patterdale fox-hounds in November, 1858. The cross is small, and may easily be missed among the rocks.

Far more imposing than the Striding Edge on Helvellyn is the little-known Sharp Edge on Blencathara. Blencathara is one of the very few lake mountains about which legends are told. On the neighbouring Sowter Fall, marching regiments, troops of phantom horsemen, and all sorts of strange apparitions have been seen; and in Scales Tarn, lying at the foot of the precipitous Tarn Crag, the stars

are to be seen at noonday. The Broad, Narrow, and Sharp Edges on Blencathara are among the most interesting things to be seen among the lake mountains, and the Sharp Edge is certainly the sharpest in the district. It is much narrower than Striding Edge, but nowhere does it offer any difficulty to the ordinary climber. The ascent of Tarn Crag, after leaving the ridge, is indeed much more unpleasant. In ice and snow these ridges present real difficulties. In the winter of 1880-81, an overhanging snow-cornice extended for a mile from the first to the second cairn on Blencathara, and so solid was it that it was possible to stand on the cornice well out beyond the edge of the mountain.

In these two papers it has been our aim to furnish the cragsman with a rough guide to the best rock climbing in the Lake District. Space compels us to omit several interesting places, such as Pavey Ark, the climbs from Grisedale Pass up to St. Sunday Crag, and others. A stranger may waste valuable time in finding the climbs best worth doing; for, except in Mr. Prior's convenient little work, he will not find any printed account of them. Mr. Prior is aware of the existence of the Chimney and Broad Stand routes up Scafell; he even gives a vague little diagram of the "easy way" up the Pillar Rock. But with this noteworthy exception, the stranger is unaided by the guide-books. Wherever there are mountains, the climber can always find ascents for himself, but nowhere are the climbs so interesting and so numerous as in the neighbourhood of Wastdale. To see the Lake District properly, it is best to take a certain number of centres, and explore thoroughly the country round each. Let no one be persuaded to strap a knapsack on his shoulders and roam the country. Beautiful scenery is not to be enjoyed by rushing through it with a heavy weight on your back; you must live in it to love it. Bowness, Keswick, Langdale Valley, Wastdale, Patterdale, and Mardale Green will be found excellent centres. Round each of these places there is scenery of differing character. Few things are more remarkable in the Lake District than the variety of its scenery. The elements are of the simplest; the effects produced are most varied. The district is seamed with mountain valleys, yet no two are alike. Nature seems to have lavished all her beauties on this unique spot of English earth. It is exquisitely compact. The most varied beauties lie side by side, but they never

jostle or compete with each other. There is space enough for each to have its appropriate setting. It is this compactness of the English Lake District which constitutes at once its charm and its danger. A very little work in the way of "railway enterprise" would ruin the district for ever. Already the railways approach perilously near the most sacred solitudes. Between Penrith and Keswick, the railway actually comes within the mountain rampart, and cuts off Blencathara from its fellow peaks. At Lakeside, at the foot of Windermere, there is a station almost on the lake; at Conistone is another; at Keswick the station is only a few minutes' walk from Derwentwater; at Boot, in Eskdale, the terminus is within ten miles of the remotest mountain fastnesses.

In England, with its vested interests and antique rights, we cannot unfortunately adopt the example so worthily set by the United States, in the case of the Yellowstone Park, and keep for the enjoyment of the public for ever the most beautiful spots of our overcrowded island. But with regard to the English Lake District, it should be well understood that any further railways will ruin it beyond hope. In Switzerland, where the distances are much greater, and the heights much vaster, a few mountain railways are almost unnoticed; in Cumberland and Westmoreland they would dominate the landscape. The specious plea of the public good cannot be urged in favour of schemes of railway extension in the lakes. Trains carry tourists to the very confines of the district on all sides. Private gain is the only motive which can prompt to further "railway enterprise." The Lake District Defence Association is doing excellent work. Already it has defeated the Borrowdale and Ennerdale schemes—schemes for mineral railways, which would have absolutely ruined the beauty of the two valleys. But railway interests are very powerful, and fresh schemes are floated every year. Manchester, having fouled with sewage and manufactures all the streams in its neighbourhood, has laid violent hands on Thirlmere, and is only waiting the necessary capital to convert that lake into a reservoir. The example cannot but be encouraging to the promoters of railway schemes. That they will triumph before long seems more than probable, and when that day comes the Lake District will be irreparably ruined.

DAYS AND NIGHTS IN THE
DESERT.

DURING the progress of the greatest of our recent and numerous "little wars," the writer had the lot to be encamped, or rather bivouacked, for nearly a month, at one not very charming point in the desert. The crossing of that wilderness of sand and gravel was found to be an arduous operation for an army; and the enemy had not neglected, by art, to add to the natural obstacles that fell to be surmounted by the invading host. From an historical point of view, the desert in question is, perhaps, chiefly remarkable on account of its having been traversed by the Israelites, in somewhat remote times, and under trying circumstances. And over some portion of its inhospitable surface, Napoleon the Great, at a later date, led his conquering legions. But in our own day and generation, this region has been the subject of general interest from its offering a field for the labours and exploits of a British army; and, it may be added, its barren wastes seem likely to be the cause of still more serious strife in the future.

That part of the wilderness where we were destined for a time to sojourn, is said to have once been covered by the streets and buildings of a populous city. Of the existence of this, or of any of its remains, we were in entire ignorance when bivouacked on its site. The ruins, if there were any such, were effectually concealed by the deep sand. Modern edifices, with the single exception of a small, solitary-looking mosque, there were none whatever; and when the troops left its neighbourhood, but little of that shrine was left save the bare walls. Its appearance was not unlike that of a miniature Norman keep, or, rather, it resembled much one of these ancient "strong-houses," or "peels," one still sees on the borderlands between England and Scotland. It therefore constituted a sort of landmark in the midst of the mostly flat surrounding country. And if the outward aspect of the mosque was forlorn enough, its internal desolation was rendered complete by our men, who stripped it of every inch of woodwork, and were just commencing the demolition of the roof, when we left the place. This species of sacrilege was, of course, owing to the want of firewood—a necessary, but extremely scarce commodity. Some mounds, or low hills, lined the banks of a channel, which was, rather in-

appropriately, termed the "Sweetwater" Canal. A few of the hillocks were perhaps natural formations, but many of them were evidently composed of the material thrown up in the excavation of the canal that bore so enticing a name. Close to it ran a railway; and the remainder of the landscape, as far as the eye could reach, was almost level, and was devoid of vegetation. By the side of the canal, however, were swamps, in which grew and flourished considerable groves of bulrushes.

We arrived on this not very attractive looking scene in the evening of what had been a hot and laborious day. The latter had been passed by us in a pretty long, and, from terrible thirst, a most painful march over some miles of the arid desert. At an earlier hour, a sharp encounter had taken place between the outposts of the opposing armies, the mounds already alluded to forming the more immediate objects of contention. They were liberally sprinkled with the evidences of combat. Broken gun-carriages and slain horses were numerous. Equipments and rifles had been discarded by many of the foe on taking their departure; and in some places the surface was deeply ploughed up by shot and shell. But killed or even wounded men were conspicuous by their absence; and we, naturally enough, concluded that these must have been carried away by the retiring defenders of the hillocks.

The first object of the parched men was, of course, to obtain water. In view of this a rush was made to the canal, where the enemy's mode of disposing of the dead was made quickly apparent. The number of dusky and defunct warriors who lay half in, half out of, the water, was far from a pleasant sight; and the bodies of these unfortunate fellows were suggestive of at least as many more that had probably been more completely immersed. It will be easily credited that, under these conditions, the fluid was scarcely "sweet-water"; but so agonising was the prevailing thirst, that it was eagerly swallowed in helmetfuls—our headpieces being of immense practical value in this respect. Having in this way refreshed themselves after the toils of the day, the men lay down on the sand, and ere long were sound asleep, being well-nigh exhausted with fatigue and anxiety.

Next morning, the sun had hardly risen, before its rays began to wax oppressive, even dangerously so; and it was obvious that some kind of shelter would needs have to be improvised. A case or two of sun-

stroke during the preceding day's march, showed the necessity of avoiding the action of the sun as far as possible. But, as yet, we had no tents, and had no immediate prospect of getting any; for the transport department was somewhat eccentric in its movements, or was, indeed, in a great degree stationary, about the time of which we are treating. The railway was useless from lack of rolling-stock, though we had heard that several locomotives were enjoying a period of inactivity in the holds of ships a few miles distant. For like reasons we were without provisions. We were, therefore, dependent for subsistence on the waters of the canal, from which proceedings were taken to fish out the dead soldiers. The thing most urgently required, however, was shelter. Wandering a little way along the canal, quite a forest of bulrushes, from ten to twelve feet high, was discovered. Great bundles of these were cut, and with them tent-shaped huts were soon erected, which proved to be admirable protections alike from the sun by day, and from the heavy dews that fell by night. While engaged in gathering these materials, we did not fail to notice that an immense dam had been built across the course of the canal, and that the railway had likewise been obstructed by a huge mound of clay and sand. These great works were the means of detaining us for some time in their vicinity.

Meanwhile the day passed on, night approached, and at length darkness came rapidly over us. We lay down in what old historians describe as "great security," being well aware that the nearest pickets of the enemy were at least two miles distant. But, of course, the usual precautions of guards and outposts were not forgotten. Everybody, with the exception of these vigilant parties, was soon slumbering, and the deep silence, peculiar to the desert, reigned supreme. Not a sound could be heard, unless, half asleep, one lay near where a sentry patrolled, with footfall muffled in the soft, loose sand. But suddenly this quiescent scene was transformed into one that almost baffles description. Amid alarming shouts, a headlong rush was made to the rifles. These weapons had been "piled," or stacked, in long lines between the rows of habitations of bulrushes; and on them were suspended the belts, haversacks, and pouches of their owners. Thus entangled, the arms were overthrown by the impetuosity of the efforts made to

seize them; and many of them were choked up with sand, being thereby rendered—for the time—all but useless for firing purposes. Men were loading their pieces, fixing on their bayonets, and assuming postures of defence not much like those depicted in drill-books, or learned laboriously on the barrack-square. All this would have been extremely ludicrous, but for the apprehension that existed on all hands, and which was not only generally felt, but quite as generally shown. Officers, scantily clad, and having anything but a martial air, began to attempt to restore order. One of these, with a sabre in one hand, and a "six-shooter" in the other, and having his figure enveloped in a rug, surmounted by a helmet, was finally successful in his exertions. Drawing up the men in line, he was endeavouring to get them into something like the semblance at least of fighting trim, when a second panic was nearly induced by another series of sounds. Two or three other regiments lay near, and their drums were beating to arms with extraordinary vigour, amid, as we could hear, great disorder. Confidence, however, began to return, and it was soon seen that the whole affair was a false alarm. Nothing could at the time be ascertained as to the cause or origin of the confusion, and soon all was quiet again; but daylight divulged reasons for these midnight disturbances.

It appeared, from a searching examination of the members of the "barrack" guard—for so it was termed—that a Turk, who was supposed to act as an interpreter, and who was, in that capacity, "attached" to our corps, had been the unconscious means of carrying terror into the hearts of many hundreds of Britain's chosen warriors. Having on a white garment, and nothing more, Joseph, as he was called, came forth from his hut in the condition known as "walking in his sleep." Approaching a sentinel in the course of his perambulations, the man challenged him, and got no reply. In the obscurity, and from the colour of his dress, the soldier probably took Joseph for an enemy. A second summons brought forth no answer; nor did a third. Thereupon the sentry charged the figure in the white shirt, and that with such vigour and address, that its yells and shrieks were uttered with considerable gusto. In a moment the hundreds of adjacent "Tommy Atkinses" were aroused by these supposed war-whoops, and the scene we have tried to describe

resulted. Taking at once to his heels, Joseph ran through the lines of the other troops we have mentioned, and effectually alarmed them also. The chief effect of these nocturnal events, was the issue of stringent orders enjoining every man to sleep ready dressed for action. The sentries, as well, were directed to be more cautious before adopting the executive measures which in this case had so thoroughly awakened not only the somnambulist, but the whole division. As it was, the sentry had in no way exceeded his duty; for the third challenge being unanswered, he was at liberty to fire upon the erratic Joseph.

Besides the promulgation of these "orders," the day following upon the interpreter's escapade was remarkable for at least two other reasons. One of these was the continued delay in the arrival of our tents and other necessities. The other was the commencement of a course of hard labour on the monuments the enemy had left on the railway and in the canal. These two subjects of consideration occupied the minds of most of us the whole day; and in the evening we were delighted to see some carts on the horizon, which eventually turned out to be our long-expected supplies.

With the advent of another day, we were beginning to make ourselves more at home, though in novel and rather adverse circumstances. Washing in the sweet waters of the canal was forbidden, and very properly so, though it became a matter of difficulty to secure the great comfort in this burning climate of frequent ablution. Holes in the ground were tried, but the water disappeared as quickly as it could be poured into them. Our helmets, when the ventilators were stopped up, were more efficient for the purpose. Some officers, who possessed waterproof sheets, were fortunate, for by means of one of these articles, a hole could be converted into an excellent bath. But more handy and capacious baths were discovered. These were several sarcophagi, which lay near the canal, at an easy distance from the camp; and they proved a very great boon to us.

The days passed on, and notwithstanding improvements in our domestic life, consequent on the opening of the railway for traffic, a great amount of sickness began to appear. The doctors had their hands full, their tents were besieged at all hours by sufferers from real or imaginary disorders. The medical-chest was of a very portable nature. It was about the size of a lady's work-box, and within it were numerous

pills, of varied colours and dimensions, neatly arranged in little compartments. In these pills, of one kind or other, were panaceas for every ill, from sunstroke to the sting of a sand-fly. So many were the patients of a morning, that a stereotyped set of questions were asked by the surgeon, who, presenting a pill to a particular sufferer, with the words, "Take that," then passed on to the next candidate for a like prescription. Very serious cases were sent to the "field hospital"—a few tents pitched about half a mile from camp. There the treatment was similar, and in addition to an increased allowance of pills, the men got a rest. Some of them found a permanent resting-place in its vicinity, for we left a few melancholy-looking crosses, made from the furniture of the mosque, near the site of the field-hospital.

One dark night, we made a movement in force, which the special correspondent of a well-known "daily" likened to the ancient and well-worn story that "the French marched up the hill, and then marched down again." And this is an accurate description of what did occur; though we represented the "French" in this particular instance, and the hill was supplanted by a wide expanse of sand and gravel. After tramping for some hours in the dark we were ordered, in subdued accents, quite appropriate to the gravity of the situation, to "lie down." Having for some time so reclined, we were told to rise, and then we started on a heavy journey home. Nearly the whole night was consumed in this (apparently) aimless walk; and the men got back to camp just in time to begin the day's labours in the canal.

Before our residence near the mosque had terminated, the details connected with cleanliness and brightness of arms and equipments, which are characteristic of soldiering in peace-time, had sadly fallen into desuetude. The abundant dew of the night was very injurious to the rifles, or at all events to their appearance from a military point of view. It covered them with a layer of rust, for the removal of which we were unprovided with oil. But for this purpose—as for many others—a "make-shift" was forthcoming. We had all, on leaving the mother-country, been supplied with boxes of grease—technically called "dubbin"—for application to boot-leather. Though not extensively used for its legitimate end, the dubbin was simply invaluable as a substitute for oil.

But with the opening up of the railway,

and, subsequently, of the canal, our sojourn around the desecrated mosque came to an end—to the undisguised delight of most of us.

GERALD.

BY KLEANOR C. PRICE.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. ROSES.

DEERHURST LODGE, the house where Theo had been so happy one rainy day in autumn, had an odd little charm of its own, which she felt more and more, day after day, when she began to live there. She and Gerald stayed in London most of the spring, and came down to Deerhurst at the beginning of the beautiful summer, bringing Ada with them. That year the summer was wonderful for its heat and beauty; the calm, serene, glowing sunshine almost reminded them sometimes of Africa.

The little house lay surrounded by green sloping lawns; its rough-cast walls had a dark trellis running along the lower part of them, and seemed to be planted in flowers of many colours, running up and shining brightly among their green leaves. It was like a little old house in a picture-book. Inside, the old oak rooms were full of dark, cool shade, and sweet and gay with bowls of roses; the lower garden was full of roses. On the smooth turf all about, soft breezes sometimes stirred the shadows of the wych-elms and the beech-trees. The sloping bank in front of the house was shaded by three large, old trees, and the roots of one of these—a sturdy, wide-branching ash—made a natural arm-chair, where Theo used to spend many hours of those summer days, watched solemnly by Wool and Toby, lying side by side.

She was weak, and tired, and languid, and very dreamy, though the life was coming back to her by degrees; and Ada, as she sat at her feet and watched her, perfectly happy in taking care of her while Gerald was away, wondered a great deal about the country and the life that had taken all Theo's strong, young energy away.

They did not talk very much through those long afternoons; sometimes she liked Ada to read to her out of old favourite books, not much caring for anything new; sometimes Mrs. Goodall came and brought her children, and little fat Johnny rolled about on the grass, and Ada played with him, while the cousins sat together under the tree. Ada was always shy of Helen, and not very fond of her; she wondered a little at the happy look which came into

Theo's eyes when she was there. Ada had very different feelings about Captain North, who came down once early in the summer. She thought of him with a happy little enthusiasm, the hero who had gone to that dreadful Africa, and had brought Theo and Gerald home. One day he gave her such a description of Kimberley and the journey there that she could not think of it afterwards without horror, and admired him, and pitied her two darlings more than ever.

Theo herself never talked of Africa, except to Gerald. Towards evening, when he came home, Ada used to go away into the garden with a basket to gather roses, leaving them together. Away she went, the little, lonely figure, past the thick, old apple-trees, where there was only a narrow, shady path between the orchard and the yard wall; down the hill, where the old walnut-tree, a little tired of life, was already scattering yellow leaves upon the walk—down among the roses, which grew in wild profusion among laurel, and laurustinus, and honeysuckle, and ivy climbing over low, old walls, and clustering everywhere. There she wandered up and down, and filled her basket, and laid her face caressingly against the loveliest roses, as if she asked them to forgive her for carrying them away.

The long, pretty walk of this garden, where primroses bloomed in spring, and roses, and pinks, and lilies in summer, was bordered by a thick hawthorn hedge, with honeysuckle and elder breaking out here and there. One may say, in passing, that this garden was very full of trees and hedges, and thus it was a paradise of birds, who sang there night and day all through the spring, and lived on strawberries and currants all the summer, to sweeten their voices for the following year.

But on the other side of this hedge just mentioned, there was a steep grass-field rising up—a sort of sheep-walk, with little paths and ledges about it, with great patches of gorse and blackberry-bushes, and old thorn-trees, and wild crab-trees, and low oaks scattered here and there along the upper slope, where grew that group of Scotch firs which bordered the lane towards Woodcote—those same firs that Theo used to see dark against the sunset from her window in Mr. Goodall's house, so very long ago.

This field belonged to Deerhurst Lodge, and the yard and garden opened on one end of it, where there was an old ice-house, and a stack of wood, and one or two hayricks between the buildings and

the lane. At its far end the field had another gate, opening into a steep bit of lane which ran into the other lane, under a row of tall oaks. It was only a grass path this way between the house and the meadows; but anyone coming by the field-road from Mainley could find his way to the house by it, instead of by the upper lane, though it was not generally used, and was not, in fact, a public path at all. A narrow track ran along between the gorse-bushes, not far from the foot of the slope, but yet so high above the garden-hedge that a man could look over it, and see everything and everybody in the garden. So it happened that Ada Fane, peacefully gathering roses in the long walk, was not so entirely alone as she fancied herself.

Her face was grave, for, when she was not with Theo, and thinking of her, she could not help thinking a great deal of that poor baby, left behind in Africa. The idea of him had been so very attractive, poor dear little delicate thing. Ada used to fancy herself nursing him for hours, loving him all the more for his weakness and need of comforting. She could only talk about him to Combe, who told her histories enough. Gerald had mentioned him once or twice, but with such pain that Ada carefully avoided the subject in future. Theo never said anything about him at all, but her little sister knew that he was never out of her thoughts. After she first heard of his birth, Ada had learnt one or two lullabies, and funny little songs that she thought he would like. Nobody must hear them now, except the birds in the garden; but Ada often sang to them in a low voice, and she thought they stopped their own songs to listen to her; probably their taste was not more classical than little Gerald's would have been. She was singing that evening, but not, as she imagined, to the birds alone. A stranger had come along the path between the gorse-bushes, walking on the soft grass noiselessly; and when he had passed a tall holly-bush which marked the corner of the garden, he looked over the hedge and saw all the flowers growing, and a slim girl's figure, dressed in pale blue, with a fair, flushed face, and a head of gold-brown curls, stooping amongst them, and heard a sweet, plaintive voice singing some venerable nonsense of nursery-rhyme—"A pie sat on a pear-tree," or something of that kind.

He stood quite still and watched her; she had no idea of him, but went on filling her basket with roses, while the evening

sun shone softly over the garden, where the thrushes pecked away at the ripest strawberries, hopping in and out and enjoying themselves without fear. The stranger pulled his hat over his eyes, for the sun shone straight into them, dazzling him provokingly.

"It can't be the right house," he said to himself. "They can't have anyone like this belonging to them. I should have known, somehow. This is an adventure."

He walked on very slowly, keeping parallel with Ada as she moved along the path. At last she began to climb a little, and he to descend; she was coming up the hill under the walnut-tree, and the thick hedge stopped here, changing into a rough paling, so that they were no longer hidden from each other. Ada glanced up at him in quick surprise, with almost a start of fear; she had a kind of dread that Mr. Warren might appear again, and though she was now quite safe from his persecutions, the idea was very disagreeable. But this was a stranger, and the pleasantest-looking man, Ada thought, that she had ever seen. He was more sunburnt even than Gerald, and had a light beard, which made him look older than he was. There was something particularly delightful in his manner as he took his hat off, and asked whether this was Deerhurst Lodge. Ada's experience of young men had been very small; her idea of perfection had lately been Captain North, of whom, however, she was very much afraid, and whose manner, even when he meant to be nice, was always cold and indifferent. The admiration she had had, poor child, had been of a sort to make her shrink and shudder. She stopped politely in the path to answer this stranger's questions, smiling, and holding her basket of roses.

"Thank you," he said, "I'm very glad," when she had assured him that this was Deerhurst. "But I am afraid this is the wrong way in, and people don't like one to storm their back-doors. I have made some mistake, certainly."

He stopped, for he was almost puzzled by the look in the girl's face; it seemed as if she knew him already, and was glad to see him.

"Do forgive me," he said, after a moment's pause; "but you are not anybody I knew before I left England?"

"Oh no, certainly not," said Ada, blushing and smiling.

"I thought I couldn't quite have lost my memory. Only it almost seemed as if you were kind enough to recognise me."

"Yes," said Ada with deeper blushes;

"I think I do. I have seen your photograph. I think you are—Mr. Stirling."

"But you don't know how delightful that is," cried Bob enthusiastically. "Why, the other day, when I went home—walked in like this, you know—my sisters didn't know me a bit. And I can't ever have seen your photograph, or else, of course, I should have recognised you."

"Did you never see it at Kimberley? My brother had it," said Ada.

"Well, I don't know; at any rate, it wasn't like you. May I suppose, then, that you are Gerald Fane's sister?" said Bob with a sort of gentle eagerness.

All this time he was in the field, and she in the garden, but now they walked on and reached the gate, and he joined her in the path. Here she gravely shook hands with him, and said that her brother and sister would be very glad to see him.

"Poor dear Mrs. Fane! how is she?" said Bob. "Is she getting like herself again?"

"She is still very weak and sad," said Ada. "Oh no, she is not like herself, and she never mentions the baby."

"What a dreadful business that was!" said Bob. "Gerald ought never to have come to the Fields, you know; he wasn't half rough enough for the sort of life—and bringing his wife there was simple madness. It was a shock to me, really, when I first saw them there. I thought they were travelling about to amuse themselves. What a beautiful garden you have! I never in my life saw such roses."

"I was so dreadfully sorry when Gerald went," said Ada. "It is very nice to have them at home again. I think they are under the trees near the house."

"I hope the sight of me won't be a shock to Mrs. Fane. What do you think?" said Bob, lingering at the gate. "Do you know, Miss Fane, I think you gather roses in such a funny way. I saw you over the hedge. You left several behind that I thought the prettiest in the garden. There was one particularly—a beautiful pink bud. I don't often want things that don't belong to me," said Bob, lifting his eyes for a moment from the roses; "but I thought at the time that I wanted that bud. I dare say Mrs. Fane has told you wonderful things about the flowers in Africa, but I assure you that flowers in England beat them hollow. I thought so, especially when I saw that rose, and you left it."

"If you want it so much," Ada said, smiling, "would you like to go and fetch

it? I'll go and tell them that you are come. Here are my scissors."

Bob drew back with a little air of alarm. "Please don't leave me alone in this garden," he said; "somebody might take me up for trespassing, or I might lose my way. And I dare say I couldn't find the rose after all. Have you any idea where it is?"

"Oh yes; I know it quite well," said Ada.

And so this conversation ended, as Bob meant it should, by their going down again together into the garden to look for that rose. Ada thought she had never met anyone before who was so fond of flowers. Bob Stirling seemed to care for them as much as she did herself. Neither had she ever met anyone who was so delightful to talk to, so perfectly kind and sympathetic about Theo, so bright, happy, and unprejudiced. And then there was the mysterious but most pleasant feeling that this charming stranger, much as he cared for the flowers, was a little absent among them, and often forgot to look at something especially lovely, when he was talking to her. He might have made all the long journey from Africa with no object but that of talking to her; yet this was impossible, because he did not even remember her photograph, and not taken in the idea that Gerald Fane had a sister at all.

While this new friendship was being made in the garden, Gerald and Theo were sitting under the ash-tree in front of the house, very happy in their own way. They had been talking a little about Ada and her future, expecting every moment to see her come round the house with her basket of roses. But the sun sank lower, and the shadows grew longer and longer, and Ada did not come, so at last Theo asked Gerald to go and look for her, and he strolled down into the garden whistling. Then quite innocently along the rose-path came Ada and Mr. Stirling, and Bob had evidently not forgotten to take care of himself; for he was wearing the prettiest pink bud in his button-hole.

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Age next Birth-day.	PAYMENTS.		Age next Birth-day.	PAYMENTS.		Age next Birth-day.	PAYMENTS.		Age next Birth-day.	PAYMENTS.	
	Yearly.	Half-yearly.		Yearly.	Half-yearly.		Yearly.	Half-Yearly.		Yearly.	Half-Yearly.
20	£1 12 5	£0 16 9	45	£3 6 2	£1 14 1	20	£1 17 8	£0 19 6	45	£3 16 0	£1 19 2
25	1 16 6	0 18 10	50	3 19 6	2 0 11	25	2 2 11	1 2 2	50	4 11 3	2 7 0
30	2 1 8	1 1 6	55	4 18 3	2 10 8	30	2 9 3	1 5 5	55	5 14 8	2 19 0
35	2 8 1	1 4 10	60	6 3 4	3 3 8	35	2 16 3	1 9 0	60	7 5 11	3 15 4
40	2 16 1	1 8 11	65	7 18 9	4 2 2	40	3 5 6	1 13 9	65	9 0 9	4 13 8

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